



# West Central Region Labor Market Analysis

The West Central Region is situated in the western portion of the State of Missouri. Counties included in the West Central Region are: Bates, Benton, Carroll, Cedar, Chariton, Henry, Hickory, Johnson, Lafayette, Pettis, St. Clair, Saline and Vernon.

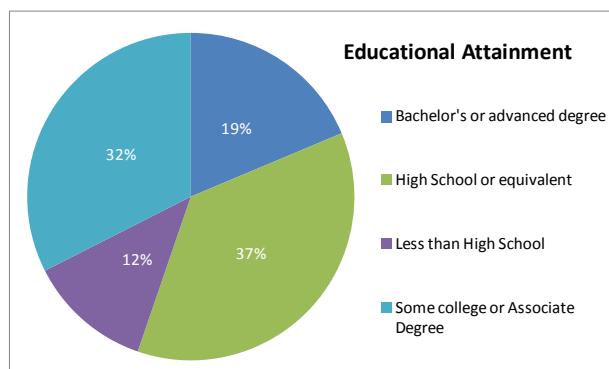
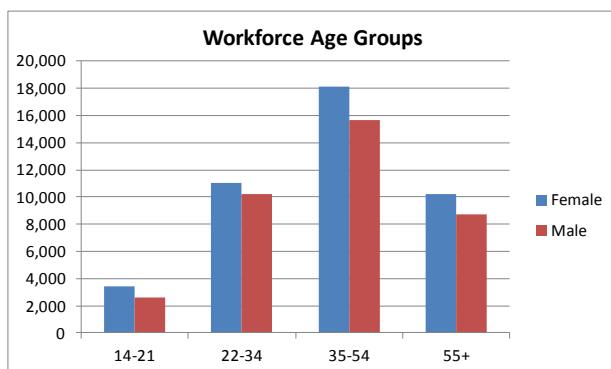
This region includes several major cities such as Warrensburg, Sedalia, Lexington, Clinton and Nevada. Many of Missouri's major highways cross through this region. Interstate 70 runs through the northern part of the region. In addition, Highway 50, Highway 54 and Highway 24 cross east/west through the region, while Highway 65 and Highway 71 run north/south allowing a great deal of travel through the area.

## Workforce

The total population of the Missouri workforce is 2,671,013, and the West Central Region is home to 80,080, or 3%, of the state's workforce. The age group for workforce is defined as 14 years or more. The county with the largest population is Pettis County, with 18,226, followed by Johnson County with 12,290.

The population of the workforce is aging. In the West Central Region, 23.67% of the workforce is age 55 or older. The percentage for the state is slightly lower, with an average of 21.44% for the same age group.

The education attainment rate for the West Central Region is the same as the average for Missouri. In the West Central Region, 88% of the workforce has a high school diploma or higher, compared to 88% for the state. The number of those who have not obtained a high school diploma is 12% in the West Central Region and 12% statewide.



Source: MERIC WIA County Demographics compiled from LEHD data ([missourieconomy.org/regional/index.stm](http://missourieconomy.org/regional/index.stm))

## **Missouri Labor Supply & Demand**

The Missouri Labor Supply & Demand Analysis Report, published March 2015, takes job seeker information from people who registered with jobs.mo.gov during 2014 and compares it to employer job ads during the same time period. *Other Services* and *Healthcare* have the highest gaps, while *Production* and *Management and Support* have the largest surplus of workforce.

WIA	Total	Health Care & Business & Science &						Management		
		Other Services	Related	Sales	Technology	Transportation	Food Service	CIMR*	Production	& Support
# Job Ads	1,322	548	206	143	51	89	78	58	27	122
% Job Ads	100.0%	41.5%	15.6%	10.8%	3.9%	6.7%	5.9%	4.4%	2.0%	9.2%
# Jobseekers	8,029	546	794	679	173	630	614	1,380	1,206	2,006
% Jobs Sought	100.0%	6.8%	9.9%	8.5%	2.2%	7.8%	7.6%	17.2%	15.0%	25.0%
<b>Gap</b>	<b>34.7%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>	<b>-12.8%</b>	<b>-13.0%</b>	<b>-15.8%</b>	

\*CIMR = Construction, Installation, Maintenance & Repair

Source: Missouri Labor Market Supply & Demand Analysis, March 2015

## **Commuting Patterns**

Commuting patterns tell us a great deal about a region. In the West Central Region, a majority of the workforce commutes to a different county to work. In fact, over half the workforce in 12 of the 13 counties in the region leave the county where they live for employment. In contrast, only 44% of the workforce leaves the West Central Region for employment. From these facts, we can conclude that most persons commute to a different county within the West Central Region for employment. In addition, we can also infer that persons living in the West Central Region are skilled in the industries and occupations in demand in this region.

Percent of Employees Working Outside of Home County			
Bates	67.9%	Johnson	55.8%
Benton	72.4%	Lafayette	63.8%
Carroll	58.2%	Pettis	41.7%
Cedar	69.9%	Saline	55.4%
Chariton	68.0%	St. Clair	75.9%
Henry	50.0%	Vernon	52.2%
Hickory	88.5%		

Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD, On the Map ([onthemap.ces.census.gov](http://onthemap.ces.census.gov))

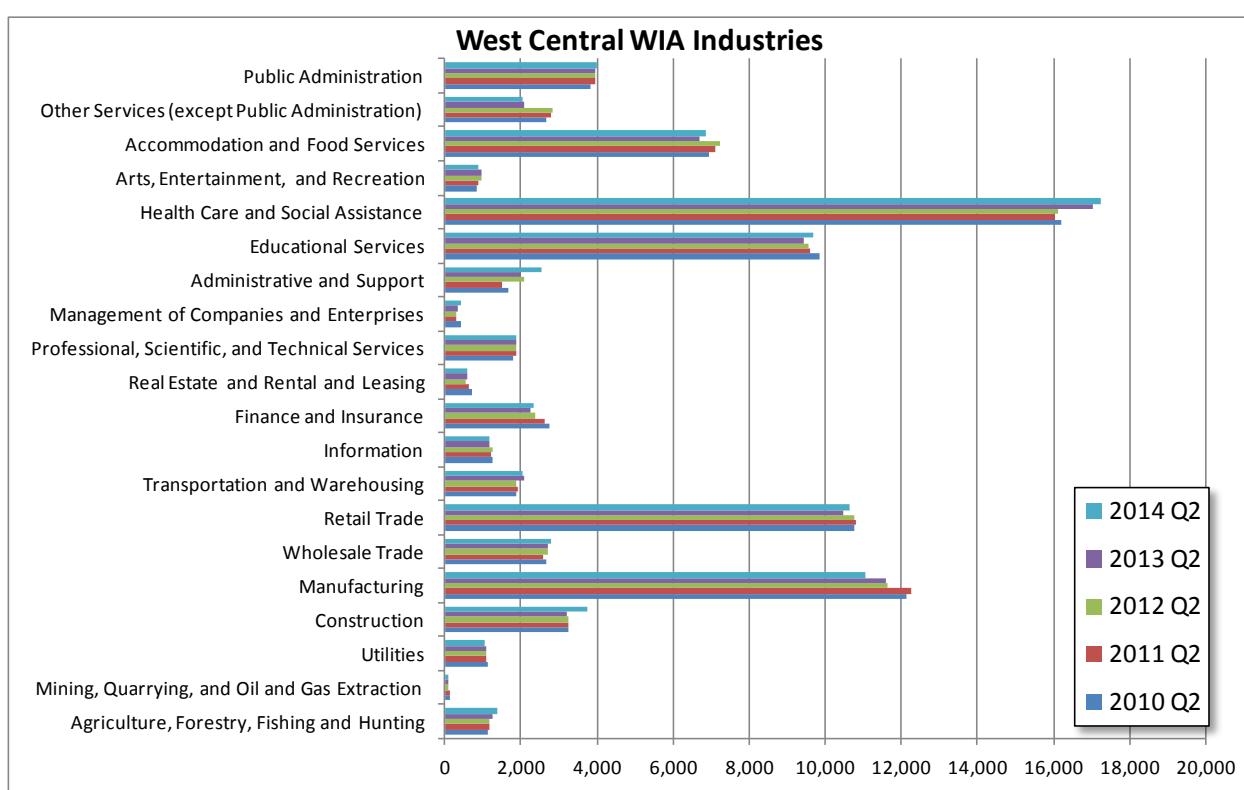
## Industries

The chart illustrates the changes in employment in the West Central Region by industry during the 5 year period. Industries employing the most people at the end of the second quarter of 2014 (most recent data available) are *Health Care and Social Assistance*; *Retail Trade*; and *Manufacturing*.

Employment in these three industries equals 47% of the total employment in the region.

Most industries experienced overall employment growth over the last 5 years. The highest levels of employment growth are seen in the industries of *Health Care and Social Assistance* and *Administrative and Support*. Some industries saw decreasing employment numbers during the same 5 year period. *Other Services (except Public Administration)* and *Manufacturing* are the industries with the highest employment decreases.

The largest employers in the West Central Region are in a variety of industries, including government and education, along with many private sector firms such as; health care with **Fitzgibbons Memorial Hospital, Bothwell Regional Health Center, and Western Missouri Medical Center**; food processing operations such as **Tyson Poultry, Inc.** and **Cargill**; manufacturers such as **3M Company, Enersys Energy Products, Waterloo Industries, Inc., Con Agra Foods, Stahl Specialty, Co. and Maxion Wheels**.



Source: US Census Bureau, QWI Explorer Application ([qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov](http://qwiexplorer.ces.census.gov))

## ***Occupations***

In *The ABCs of Missouri Career Grades 2012-2022*, letter grades are assigned to 800+ occupations based on the total job openings and average wage of the occupation. Job openings include both new growth (jobs added to the workforce) and replacements (vacancies created by employees moving to a different occupation or retiring). Projections are made for each occupation on a statewide basis as well as each of the regions. Therefore, a job may be graded differently in the statewide projections and each region based on the openings and wages for specific areas of the state.

In the West Central Region, approximately 29,000 job openings are projected between 2012 through 2022. Most of the job openings, over 17,000 are projected in the Grade B category. Many of the job openings are in entry level occupations, such as *Food Preparation and Serving Workers; Cashiers; Retail Salespersons; Waiters and Waitresses; Office Clerks; Personal Care Aides and Laborers*.

Each occupation is also classified in the Now, Next and Later categories. A “Now” job would require short- to moderate-term on-the-job training lasting no more than 12 months. “Next” occupations generally require an Associate’s degree or substantial vocational training lasting more than one year. “Later” occupations usually require a bachelor’s or advanced degree and in addition to specific work experience.

West Central WIA - Good Outlook Careers				
			Grade	Average Openings Wage
Title				
N O W	Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	B+	1,423	\$17,154
	Cashiers	B	1,365	\$18,814
	Retail Salespersons	B	987	\$21,643
	Waiters and Waitresses	B	729	\$17,035
	Office Clerks, General	B	512	\$26,362
	Personal Care Aides	A	499	\$18,547
	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	B	436	\$22,737
N E X T	Nursing Assistant	B+	612	\$20,258
	Registered Nurse	A	458	\$55,175
	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	B+	392	\$34,388
	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	A	380	\$35,474
	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	B+	352	\$24,163
	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	B	309	\$32,793
	Cooks, Restaurant	B+	295	\$18,065
L A T E R	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	A	439	\$ 39,419
	General and Operations Managers	A+	381	\$ 74,068
	Substitute Teachers	B	259	\$ 18,247
	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed.	B	214	\$ 37,607
	Middle School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Ed.	A	204	\$ 45,507
	Accountants & Auditors	A	182	\$ 57,458
	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	B	109	n/a

Source: The ABCs of Missouri Career Grades 2012-2022, West Central Region

MERIC also prepares a document listing the top 20 occupations based on the number of job openings for each region, and the *West Central Region Top Openings* is attached.

Another source for identifying in-demand occupations is through real-time data. A tool called Burning Glass compiles information from job postings on over 38,000 sites into a database that can be queried to find information on jobs. This information provides insight on the jobs employers are currently hiring, occupations that are in-demand and skills that employers require for employees.

The Missouri Real-Time Labor Market Summary compiles information queried through Burning Glass. Briefs are published for the State of Missouri, and for each region. Since the brief is published every other month, the information is always current. The most recent publication is attached to this summary.

Below is a list of the top 25 occupations posted in job ads by employers in the West Central Missouri Region in calendar year 2014.

Burning Glass -- Top Job Postings in 2014	
Occupation	Job Postings
*+Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	605
*+Retail Salespersons	315
*+Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	246
*'+First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	225
*+Registered Nurses	177
*+First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	161
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	141
+Childcare Workers	137
+Customer Service Representatives	136
Physical Therapists	125
*+Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	115
*+Cashiers	109
*+Nursing Assistants	106
*+Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	103
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	94
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	87
Medical and Health Services Managers	85
Food Service Managers	69
+Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	65
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	64
+Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	63
Driver/Sales Workers	59
Speech-Language Pathologists	57
*+Waiters and Waitresses	56
Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	52

Source: Labor Insight/Burning Glass Occupation Data

\*Occupation on projected top 20 West Central Region Top Openings list

+Occupation listed as West Central Region Good Outlook Career in Career Grades

Within the sources of information for employment projections and in real-time data in job ads, we see many of the occupation titles repeated, especially in the Now and Next categories. Reviewing the data found in multiple sources helps to validate the need for these occupations.

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